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Indigenous Māori and Tongan Perspectives on the Role of Tongan Language and Culture in the Community and in the University in Aotearoa—New Zealand

MERE KĒPA AND LINITĀ MANU'ATU

PŌ AKO

In Aotearoa New Zealand it has become clear that programs started by people in a community are a better possibility for robust partnership and practice in education. In fact, Indigenous Māori grassroots work to establish Te Kōhanga Reo: Early Childhood Education conveys this point well. The Indigenous Māori feature of Te Kōhanga Reo is that partnership and practice are enmeshed in social networks that emphasize the richness of Māori language and the complex ways Māori people live their lives (culture). In this manner, Te Kōhanga Reo elevates differences amongst the tribes—the specific and the out of the ordinary—rather than blindly following technocratic assumptions of education grounded in the concept of the individual, sameness, and universals.

It is time now to look more closely at the notion of social networks creating the robust partnership and practice between Tongan parents, their children, and Mt. Roskill Grammar School, Auckland. In January 1991 not a single Tongan student attending the grammar school passed the national examination for a School Certificate. In May 1992 Pō Ako was organized by the Tongan parents in response to the enduring absence of their adolescents' accomplishment in the school Kēpa, T.M.A. (2001). Language matters: The politics of teaching immigrant adolescents school English (p. 206). Doctoral Thesis. School of Education, The University of Auckland (Kēpa 2001, 206; Manu'atu 2000, 151). Pō Ako is a community-based project that established partnerships and practices to break the experience of absence—cultural alienation and educational exclusion—overwhelming the students. From its introduction, Pō Ako drew upon

Tongan language and culture in order to strengthen the students' understanding of academic ideas. By way of this practice, the students do not discover a "pre-existing" meaning prescribed in the official curriculum; rather, meaning is created and re-created as the tutors teach and the students learn and vice versa. Likewise, the parents are able to express their issues concerning the school, to question and learn from the tensions and contradictions between the school and themselves. The significance of this critical dialogue/Pō Talanoa is to enrich and bolster Tongan language and culture, the students' academic learning, and the parents' critical awareness that they no longer remain what they were in the Kingdom. By implication, Tongan peoples' relationship to the world is linguistic, and meaning is being constructed and reconstructed from the artistic or linguistic enterprise. The Indigenous feature is that Pō Ako is a specific example of Tongan grassroots work to include Tongan language and culture in education.

In the beginning the program for "educating (Tongan) people in the night" was formed in the extensive relationships and activity among the Tongan teacher in the school and the Tongan Parents' Group, Tākanga 'a Fohe 'i Puke Tapapa Incorporated Society, the very small number of Tongan academics in the university, and Tongan students who combined university and polytechnic studies and work as tutors. The important practice for the Tongan teacher was to locate young bilingual, bicultural, biliterate Tongan women and men who would be part of the effort to promote the Tongan students' learning of the curriculum subjects in Tongan and English. From the start, the parents were hopeful that through the appointment of youthful Tongan tutors their children would come to know the value of study in the tertiary sector of the education system. In addition, the parents hoped that by employing Tongan tutors a "signal would be sent" to Tongan graduates to actively participate in the history-making project (Manu'atu 2000, 157). Of course, lying behind the Tongan teacher is a shared reality—a community, a tradition, a language—that is not an external object from which she stands detached but rather is an ongoing partnership that embraces her principles of conduct that guide her practice. By extension, the teacher's relationship with the tertiary institutions incorporated presentations of career advice made to both the students and the parents by liaison officers from the different institutions. The important notion is that the Tongan teacher in the school accords importance to the roles played by Tongan

people, whether in the form of providing tutelage and career advice in the present; social customs and traditions of value from the past; and critical education in the making.

To accomplish the seemingly impossible feat of treading a way between technocratic (skills-based) assumptions in education and Indigenous wisdoms, the New Zealand European/Pālangi principal, two counselors, and the Māori teacher actively supported this Tongan community regardless of the opinions of critics from within the school. The four staff members accepted collaborative tasks to encourage the Tongan students to learn from the content set by the subject-teachers; to set up an evening class program to teach the Tongan parents initial computer skills; to connect the administrators in Pō Ako with governmental agencies in order to access funds; and to schedule meetings with the Indigenous Māori and Samoan and Cook Islands Māori teachers in the school during one formal school day weekly. The facilities of the English Language Teaching Unit where the Tongan and Māori teachers taught migrant students from across the world during the day were made available to the parents and the students to carry out the project “in the night.” The conservative board of trustees shared the school’s finance with Pō Ako. The importance of the relationship of sharing money meant that the Tongan teacher as the coordinator (of Pō Ako) could redistribute it to the Tongan tutors and purchase material resources: dictionaries written in Tongan and English, pens, pencils, exercise books, calculators, and textbooks for the subject-disciplines of geography, mathematics, and science (Kēpa 2001, 206–7). Importantly, the Pālangi and Māori staff members were participating within the movement and not waiting for it to happen and trying to be part of the project when it became well known. In this light, the focus on “being in relationships,” being active participants in Pō Ako, calls the Pālangi and Māori staff members and the Tongan community to understand that partnership is not a private or individual phenomenon but rather a social phenomenon acquiring its meaning in social interaction.

As all people live lives in a “dueling” world, rather than a world that presupposes an objective unity or a coherent whole that does not exist “out there,” the Pālangi, Māori, and Tongan people can never escape our historical context (Grenz 1996, 7). All of us stand in different places in society, and we develop different perspectives on partnership and different meanings of practice. As an example, the Indigenous Māori teacher’s

perspective on the event of selecting the first chairperson of the Tongan Parents' Group is conveyed in order to begin to grapple with and grasp Tongan notions of robust partnership and practice. It must be pointed out that the membership's decision to choose a Tongan-speaking church steward as their chairperson was not a disqualification of Tongan parents who are more adept in English and the technocratic culture. During this forming phase of the society, the significance of the practice was an affirmation of the parents' interest in being represented by someone who would articulate their values and vision as genuinely worried migrants from the Kingdom of Tonga. The selection of the leader clearly would have both familiar and different meaning for this collective body from what the Indigenous Māori teacher would understand since her knowledge of leadership is culturally grounded on tribal kinship that is different from the experience that directs the Tongan parents (Kēpa 2001). In other words, the social interactions and positioning of people in Tongan society are conducted in relation to the Hou'eiki, the king and his family in the Kingdom. When Tongan people migrate to countries such as Aotearoa, they continue to acknowledge the role of the "Hou'eiki as their hierarchy" (Manu'atu 2000, 5). The socially constructed "elitism" amongst Tongan people creates linguistic and cultural practices that emphasize social status and ranking—a practice that differentiates many Tongan people from Indigenous Māori of Aotearoa whose language and hierarchy have been distorted by the prevailing Pālangi society over nearly two hundred years. While eschewing the notion of universalism, there remains the tendency for Tongan migrants to reconceptualize relationships of authority that lie within Tongan experience from the past, that is, the Kingdom. Doing so allows the Tongan people to understand that "being in relationships" includes absence as well as presence. The point is that the Tongan community is not merely what presents itself to us in Pō Ako; it is also what is not now present to us because it is past. Overall, the principles of conduct from the past continue to inform the Tongan migrants' relationships and practices in the present.

From its inception, the Tongan and Māori teachers agreed that since "being active participants" in Pō Ako was to be a richer and curious way of practice we had to start learning from the students and their parents, and we had to continue to learn from each other. We had to begin to trust our Pālangi colleagues whose society controls the education system and with whom we shared aspects of religious and professional

experience. The influence of Indigenous ways of living lives that are marginalized in society employs the tactic of juxtaposing the individual and the community; Christianity and Indigenous beliefs; languages and cultures. This juxtaposition involves respect for peoples' language, age, gender, ancestral affinity; religious, social, political, economic, and educational relations; occupation in the homeland; and the intellectual capacity of all people to accentuate critical imagination. It is important to understand how the marginalized communities view our various relationships within which we live since our perceptions are important when collective practice is being established. Hence, robust partnership and practice in education lies in a profound respect for the notion of unity within cultural diversity (see Freire 1993). As such, it is a practice that enables the teachers to recover a common ideal within the experience of diversity without jeopardizing our personal language and culture. The partnership offers scope for the teachers to exercise curiosity about education that emphasizes Tongan language and culture (Kēpa 2001, 204).

To engage in relational practice, a key consideration is the presence of community. The point is that teachers cannot accomplish everything in education institutions where very little seems to change, where there are very few changes in the curriculum, where there is almost no shift in the technocratic ways of knowing what to do, and where lists of information continue to be transmitted in the conventionally accepted manner. The Indigenous notions of partnership and practice in Pō Ako do not consign the ways of knowing what to do to the technocratic assumptions only but to an enhanced sense of cultural diversity, social networks, and community. The emerging consensus is that Indigenous peoples live lives in an interrelated and participatory world. This partnership concurs with Mason Durie's counsel that "There has been a greater sense of determination, the adoption of new strategies, and the emergence of a sense of family between Indigenous peoples in various parts of the world" (Durie 2003, 271). In fact, robust partnership and practice by Indigenous peoples is local and international and social, historical, and history making.

Pō Ako, as an educational program for Tongan adolescents held twice weekly "in the night," provides an example of partnership or unity within cultural diversity for the Indigenous Māori and Tongan teachers working alongside a Tongan community in the city. In recognizing how

the partnership and practice would take place beyond the contributions of the technocratic assumptions in education means grounding knowledge, information, beliefs, expectations, and biases in the discourses of Indigenous peoples.

PŌTALANOA

All of this is to say that unending curiosity is required in order to reconceptualize the presence of the community in robust relational practice. *PōTalanoa* (curious dialogue in the night) is one way that the teachers, students, and parents in Pō Ako can straddle boundaries that may or may not be created by language, social position, religious membership, professional standing, or a range of other cultural orientations. Among the issues that confront Indigenous Tongan and Māori teachers is the knowledge that the classroom is only one context wherein partnership and practice take place. For the teachers, partnership points to the obligation to work with the parents around issues directly related to Tongan language, social rank, education qualifications, and aspects of day-to-day living. The idea is that where the Tongan children are struggling against cultural upheaval their parents are in even more turmoil.

The Indigenous feature of PōTalanoa is that it is given birth as a cultural entity within, not external to, the society of those who violate persons and collectives; to the extent that it is critical dialogue, it cannot fail to address and encounter the curiosity of the cultural entity in which it is conceived. The moral action of the teachers, parents, and students ought to be the perpetual critique of present-day practice in education. Since moral practice is embedded in social networks, it is involved in relations of power and duels that constitute the world. PōTalanoa, then, is an entering by Tongan people into the “currents” of technocratic/Pālangi consciousness and the personal. The dialogical relationship involves the critical understanding of the historical and current situations and an awareness of future possibilities of practice in education. In this relationship the parents, the students, and the school question memories, visions, ideas, and information in order to make changes where possible.

Tensions are created in multiple and complex ways. The Tongan teacher’s contribution is of value in pointing out the political and social relations engaged by her in PōTalanoa. According to her, when there is

no social network of like-minded people in the secondary school to share her thinking, frustrations, and struggles, then her energy is sapped very quickly. For example, there is a sense of being constantly “watched” by the school, thereby discouraging ideas that might threaten the existing power relations. Within the Tongan community, too, the teacher is “scrutinized constantly” about her “interest” in the Pō Ako. As a young, unmarried woman from the “outer islands” of the Kingdom, she has no status within wider Tongan society. Moreover, her parents and grandparents do not feature in the business, education, or elite class in the Kingdom; therefore, her genealogy can be problematic for some of the parents who perceive leadership as only characteristic of people who descend from the established or elite genealogy (Manu’atu 2000, 181). The relational teacher must be able to reconceptualize her position, as it pertains to status in the school, and then use her knowledge of the Tongan community and education networks to support, not organize, the parents in making appropriate partnerships and practices. Thus, the artistic and linguistic endeavor cannot be overemphasized when the teacher commits to work with her own community.

Another tension is that some parents want a “quick fix” solution to the low achievement experienced by their children. By way of PōTalanoa, they converse about how they want the tutors to prepare their students for the national examinations during the four-hour weekly program in Pō Ako (Manu’atu 2000, 182). Another purpose of PōTalanoa is to bring to the parents’ attention that a change in their own and the school’s thinking is required in order to bring about “real” achievement by the Tongan students. In this manner, they should acquire a reasonable understanding of how Tongan language and culture is inseparable from understanding Tongan students and, hence, requires inclusion in the nearly thirty hours a week endured by them in class. Passing the responsibility of teaching the Tongan students (in their own language) to the Tongan tutors in Pō Ako is irresponsible of the school, especially when Tongan people have the least economic resources and political power to support their children’s learning in Aotearoa. The point being established is that it is the school’s responsibility and task to teach *all* students *well*; this is achievable by way of a dialogical partnership with its diverse cultural communities. The tendency to value Indigenous knowledge and culture only because of its historic relationships is a propensity to miss the

sense of development (transformation) that is part of the Indigenous partnership and practice with technocratic education (Durie 2003, 277). In other words, a celebration of culture, heritage, and Indigenous knowledges will fail to provide for academic learning and vocational training for the workforce if the underlying principles upon which the knowledges are constituted are not applied to contemporary times.

How, then, can the role of Tongan language and culture in the community be conceptualized through PōTalanoa? Specifically, Mt. Roskill Grammar School and the Tongan community can approach an understanding of a complex partnership through a to-and-fro movement, reaching provisional understandings and refining and resisting them where necessary. Then, we engage this sense to understand more precisely the significance of the relations between technocratic assumptions and Tongan language and culture in education. With a better idea of the significance of the role of Tongan language and culture in Pō Ako, we transform our ideas of partnership and practice in the community.

TONGAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE IN THE AUCKLAND UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY (AUT)

In this section the authors reflect upon a Tongan concept called *Fetuiaki-Mālie* (bringing people together in a friendly, emotional, and critical relationship) to conceive of education as a responsibility to the personal community, respect for and use of the language and culture of Indigenous peoples, and consensus decision making. By way of *Fetuiaki-Mālie*, we put across important Indigenous Tongan and Māori ways of understanding partnership and practice in the university.

Turning now to the AUT: On June 30, 2004, the School of Education at the university was advised that their proposal to offer the level 7 *National Diploma in Teaching Early Childhood Education, Pasifika* had been approved by the New Zealand Teachers Council. On July 28, 2004, the diploma was launched in a ceremony bringing together Tongan, Samoan, Fijian, Niue, Cook Islands Māori people, Indigenous Māori, and New Zealand European/Pālangi people. The inaugural ceremony was held at the university's Ngā Wai o Horotiu Marae (meeting ground). It should be noted here that the terminology "Pasifika" has been established by the Ministry of Education. The suggestion is that the political nomenclature

subsumes the migrants and their descendants from the tropical islands of Tonga, Samoa, Niue, Tokelau, Fiji, and Cook Islands in the prevailing New Zealand European/English-speaking society. In this manner, its use subverts the authority of Tongan language and culture, for instance, in the diploma.

In the school's attempt to include and emphasize the complex Pasifika communities and their intimate knowledges and perspectives in the diploma, the staff recognized that its organizational structure ought to reflect the Treaty of Waitangi (the partnership between Indigenous Māori and the Crown) and the students they aim to train and educate. As part of its new network of relationships, the school set up the Development Team, consisting in academic and allied staff across AUT, the Pasifika Educators Network (PEN), the Pasifika Consultative Group (PCG) and its Early Childhood Education subgroup. The PCG membership was drawn from all the educational sectors including Early Childhood Education. The purpose of the PCG extends beyond the requirements for the production of the diploma; however, the knowledge, skills, calibre, and experience of the membership are seen as vital and invaluable to the creation of the diploma and then Pasifika education at all levels within the school.

In the authors' attempt to accentuate the cultures of the students enrolled in the *National Diploma in Teaching Early Childhood Education, Pasifika*, we question the technocratic assumption of a single kind of experience of education and its abstract understanding of culture as rigid, passionless, superior, and universal. Then we discuss the inaugural ceremony in order to convey FetuiakiMālie in practice. As members of the Development Team, we acknowledge that our understanding and commitment to the diploma is shaped by our experiences in the field of Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), transcultural and intercultural education and peace, migrant issues in education, Indigenous perspectives on education, and Māori development and advancement. This understanding and commitment both influences the questions and production of this section and may not reflect the opinion of the School of Education. We hope sincerely that the critique will contribute significantly to meaningful intellectual dialogue and support the re-creation and implementation of partnership and practice that will include Indigenous languages in the university.

A PERSONAL NOTE ON “SCIENCE” AND TECHNOCRATIC
EDUCATION POLEMICS

Beginning on a personal note, we discuss the struggle with “science” (meaning knowledge) and ultimately with some important situations encountered by the Development Team throughout the eighteen-month process leading to the inaugural ceremony, as well as the influence of science, Christianity, and technocratic education on Tongan people in the Kingdom and Tongan migrants living in Aotearoa–New Zealand.

During the process of doctoral study the Tongan teacher’s views on technocratic education changed. Before 1995 she believed in the idea of “science” as truth and in general theory as a way of social “reason” that must be defended to sustain a good society. She was influenced greatly by Christianity and the technocratic education system exported from Aotearoa–New Zealand, reproduced uncritically in the Kingdom at the elite Tonga High School, and later “received” by her in three universities and a college of education in Aotearoa. By the time her thesis appeared in 2000, she was already moving toward an Indigenous standpoint. The move from an assimilated marginalized and Christianized Tongan to an Indigenous perspective came quickly; a major encouragement for the change was a deepening understanding of her relationship with the Fonua/land of her birth and extending her cultural, political, economic, and educational relationships with Te Whenua/land of Aotearoa. The relationship between this event and her Indigenous turn tells a story that is central to the role of Tongan language and culture in the university.

The crystallization of an affirmative Indigenous migrant Tongan standpoint brought to the surface a new set of internal tensions and struggles. Validating a concept of “Indigeneity,” which meant relating an affirmative distinctiveness and community around Tongan language and culture, has necessarily entailed challenging core assumptions of the technocratic education system. Therefore, those ideas, beliefs, and practices that were marginalized and censored within the prevailing education regime for reasons related to an Indigenous Tongan discourse remained stigmatized. She learned that her call for the juxtaposition of Tongan language and culture and English-speaking, skills-based education could coexist easily with the oppression of the other Pasifika cultural communities. Indeed, her call for the validation of Tongan language and

culture in the diploma tended to reinforce a discourse that understands the role of Indigenous languages and cultures in the education system by way of a numerical dominance, thus relegating to a marginal and devalued rank the beliefs and practices of the numerically weaker Pasifika peoples.

The Tongan educator's bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate reconception of education conflicted with the view held by those colleagues on the Development Team whose language and culture relate with the Fonua/land of Fiji, Samoa, Niue, Tokelau, and the Cook Islands. In this regard, tensions broke out in the Development Team around issues of numerical rank. She protested the tendency amongst Samoan people, in particular those representatives from ministerial offices, to reinforce the specific group's numerical dominance. She disapproved of the homogenizing discourse of technocratic education, which oppressed those people whose experiences tied them to both the personal and the Pālangi/Western knowledge systems. Whereas she wished to make space for bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural education—Tongan and English—the Pālangi members of the team aimed to challenge the very rendering of Tongan language and culture as a relevant part of education. That latter challenge found expression as well among the assimilated sector of the "Pasifika" educators who not only opposed the idea for reducing them to a Tongan methodology and content but also criticized the notion for reinforcing what they took to be a marginalizing strategy toward their personal culture.

Internal divisions surfaced as well around the Ministry of Education's terminology of "Pasifika." The construct projected ideals of assimilation by way of dismissing and devaluing "Pasifika" languages and cultures and imposing the English language and a single kind of experience of education and its abstract goals on the diploma. For instance, charges were leveled that this kind of education reflected the largely white, professional, management-class conventional values of those who control the social, political, and cultural institutions. The cultural construct holds no sense of connectedness to the Kingdom of Tonga, no sense of "place" taken on by all sectors of the people of Tonga living in Aotearoa—overstayers, those on work permits, tourist visas, short-term residents, long-term residents, and citizens. Thus, the white, professional, management class, consciously or unconsciously, constructs Pasifika without recognition of the complex concept of educational responsibility as a communal task,

respect for and use of the languages and cultures of Pasifika peoples, and consensus decision making. From an Indigenous point of view, such thinking would engage an active, not a passive, relationship by Pasifika peoples with technocratic education. FetuiakiMālie, it is claimed, brings together a more complex understanding of Indigenous peoples' responsibilities and tasks in education.

What is clear from the discussion so far is that it is insufficient for the Development Team simply to sit in meetings that are called by educators from the prevailing Pālangi-English-speaking culture in order to "receive" their "transmissions" about the diploma. Missing are a political critique of technocratic assumptions in education; economic understandings of the term "Pasifika" as a marketing "tool"; respect and use of the diverse Pasifika languages; Pasifika peoples' genealogical relationship to the Indigenous Māori; warm social relationships, emotions, feelings, passions, gods, spirits, and ancestors; and bringing together narratives of pain and suffering in a context of love and hope. In this view, robust partnership and practice in the Diploma encounters its highest expression in the conceptual framework—FetuiakiMālie—that reminds us that language is a practice of meaning, a site of cultural struggle, and a way in which the antagonistic relations between different cultural groups are produced.

FETUIAKIMĀLIE

It would seem reasonable to suggest that what is required is "bringing together" the people in the Development Team to "listen to each other think" about education, that we talk together not only about ways of thinking grasped by the people of Tonga, Samoa, Niue, Tokelau, Fiji, and the Cook Islands but the numerical hierarchies of knowledge mentioned earlier. In doing so, imagination, creativity, and faith would enrich and extend in deep, trustful, patient, and hopeful ways the education dialogue and context—the diploma. This understanding of partnership and practice the authors call "FetuiakiMālie." We would like to propose the concept in order to imagine a strategy of naming the past—the Fonua/land of Tonga, Samoa, Niue, Tokelau, Fiji, and the Cook Islands—and sharing the language, beliefs, and aspirations of these cultural communities marginalized in the university; of questioning the

Pasifika peoples' relationship to Indigenous Māori by way of responsibility to the Treaty of Waitangi; and of critical dialogue about prevailing political and economic impacts that weigh heavily on Indigenous peoples in the university.

The interrelationship between Fetuiaki and Mālie fosters and promotes roles grounded on trust, respect, kindness, generosity, sincerity, emotion, feelings, experience, reason, intellect, and honor. Thus, FetuiakiMālie accentuates intellectual and community leadership, friendship, closeness, and alliance amongst Indigenous peoples denied the value of their perceptions, passions, experiences, traditions, and customs in the university. FetuiakiMālie addresses a conception of authority, not in the institutional sense of a bureaucratized university system, but rather as a framework to claim the authority of Tongan language and culture, for example. In this sense of FetuiakiMālie, authority means physically listening to each other naming "our" own place and people. This conception of authority is much richer and addresses more directly the contradictions and tensions between goals of collaboration, hierarchies of knowledge, and consensus. This thinking resists enduring views of the Pasifika peoples as a homogeneous group and views of people who migrate to Aotearoa simply for training, job, and income opportunities. In this intellectual sphere FetuiakiMālie raises questions about common experience as the production of knowledge, the authority of Pālangi English-speaking educators' perception of Pasifika, and the character of our personal cultural, political, and economic struggles. As a conceptual framework it brings together the Indigenous peoples' sense of family.

FetuiakiMālie, therefore, cannot be merely a flavor or an essence! The concept places greater emphasis than technocratic education on understanding Indigenous peoples' sense of family, which does not easily translate into tightly focused technocratic systems of knowledge. The intellectual conception puts emphasis on a robust relationship and practice in education. Hence, the authors believe that by bringing critical perspectives, concerns, and outlooks to the heart of educational debate on the diploma, the Development Team would better understand the complex Indigenous sense of family and thus better inform the membership of the current social contexts in which all of us learn, work, and live. Doing so would bring together the relationship between absence, presence, and history making in practice.

Now we want to turn briefly to the *Pōwhiri*, or ceremony, whereby the diploma was launched. Describing faithfully what FetuiakiMālie means in practice is difficult. It is easier to describe various methods and techniques than it is to provide a coherent framework, but the concept can be authenticated by the Pōwhiri held by the School of Education at Ngā Wai o Horotiu. Although oftentimes described as a “welcome,” the importance of the Indigenous Māori practice of Pō whiri extends well beyond a reception for visitors. It is the encounter bringing together peoples and diminishing the distance between say, Fonua and Te Whenua; the Pasifika peoples, Pālangi, and Indigenous Maori; the celestial and the earthly; to orate our relationships and the distinctions amongst us. As Mason Durie has put it, “Achieving balance between commonalities and uniqueness provides a special blend of hospitality and in turn offers insights into people’s pursuit of collaboration and consensus without sacrificing differences” (2003, 54). The innovative ceremony organized by some members of the Pasifika Educators Network placed great importance on the broader set of spiritual, physical, and social relationships that produce education and sought balance across the communities concerned with the diploma. Arranging culturally significant encounters is a responsibility that the connected educator must engage with insight, compassion, confidence, experience, wisdom, and forbearance. Occasions such as the Pōwhiri at Ngā Wai o Horotiu cannot be manufactured artificially since the purpose of ceremonial ritual carried out on Marae is an encounter to strengthen relationships and to include others. The point being emphasized is that without proper consideration of all the communities and their spiritual, intellectual, and professional leadership, a well-intentioned act of partnership could be seen simply as therapeutic. Bringing together Tongan, Samoan, Fijian, Niue and Tokelau peoples and Māori and New Zealand European/Pālangi peoples requires the educators to trust each other, to respect each other, and the capacity to include each other completely unforced.

In this action, the Pōwhiri becomes FetuiakiMālie and vice versa, where all the cultural communities talk openly about the diploma and critique its cultural, political, and economic complexities in their own way (meaning language and cultural practice). It is by calling into question the universal and abstract claims of technocratic education; the term

“Pasifika” as a “marketing tool”; the points of tension between the PCG and the Pālangi educationalists over reimbursement for advice; the intricate consultation process; the new networks of relationship; and the production of content reflecting the breadth and depth of values, traditions, and experiences that technocratic education becomes inclusive. These transformations within the Pōwhiri—the institutionalization of Tongan language and culture in education and the challenges to existing canons and disciplines—reveal the shortcomings apparent in the enactment of the diploma. In the attempt of FetuiakiMālie to address these issues, a more complex conceptualization of the diploma is being developed. In brief, it is through the ceremonial ritual of the Pōwhiri that FetuiakiMālie becomes practice in the diploma and in the university. Overall, the Development Team opened up a way to re-create Pasifika peoples’ language and culture in the diploma, whereby the staff and students might deepen their understanding of education and attract Pasifika students to all levels of study at the School of Education. The context has raised painful tensions for each member of the Development Team about education; for example, the Indigenous members of the PCG have learned deeply about our marginalization in our own Fonua and Te Whenua o Aotearoa.

Most important, the *National Diploma in Teaching Early Childhood Education, Pasifika* has become authenticated. In particular, the Indigenous members in the Pasifika Educators Network in relationship with our Pālangi colleagues at the School of Education have an exciting challenge ahead. Both personally and collectively, the educators can no longer teach only universal and abstract knowledge in the diploma. The tide has turned, and all of us must think of ways to educate and train teachers who will strengthen children in *Early Childhood Education, Pasifika*. In turn, these novice teachers must enter into practice that deepens the youngsters’ personal and English-language strengths in order that they become bicultural, biliterate, and bilingual citizens in a diverse Aotearoa–New Zealand.

With a view toward making possible reflection on this article, the writers want to conclude by offering a preliminary consideration of the Indigenous phenomenon in the community and university in Aotearoa–New Zealand. As we have noted repeatedly, the idea to relate technocratic assumptions and Indigenous wisdoms is at the heart of the Māori and

Tongan perspectives on the role of Indigenous languages and cultures in education. Our perspectives acknowledge the importance of technocratic assumptions in education but see the education of Indigenous peoples being even more powerfully affected by political, economic, and environmental influences, and also grounded in our own languages and cultures. These are the wider contexts of education that include the relationships of temporality—past, present, and future. This broader view of education acknowledges that the capacity of any single Indigenous group to shape education on its own is limited. Changes in technocratic education and the end of cultural marginalization and educational alienation confronted by us require complex approaches involving partnership and practice that straddle Indigenous communities. This requires a different way of thinking with key roles for Indigenous educators as catalysts, brokers, coordinators, and monitors as well as in Indigenous forms of leadership that support all of the peoples’ aspirations, not simply “fattens” the leader. Reconsider, for a moment, that in Aotearoa–New Zealand some Indigenous peoples, particularly Māori, see the separation of technocratic education and personal culture as artificial and believe that the two approaches should be related. Māori views include contexts of education such as economic, social, and environmental impacts, Māori tribal distinctiveness, access to language and culture, and access to natural resources. It also addresses responsiveness of education to Māori aspirations in, for example, Te Kōhanga Reo.

To put all of this within the abstract with which we began, there remains that notion that technocratic assumptions cast a large shadow over the role of Indigenous languages and cultures in the community and university. So the terms we want to reestablish are that the present is not the inevitable outworking of the past, that it is not simply the latest stage in history making; that to engage in the task of transforming the presently existing beliefs in education will take robust and imaginative partnership and practice that include Indigenous peoples’ languages and cultures. On a final note, Mason Durie’s counsel reminds us that

While there are important differences in the circumstances of Indigenous peoples in Aotearoa–New Zealand or in Tonga, or between Australian Aborigines and native Fijians, or between native Hawaiians and native Americans, or between the Nisga’a of Canada

and the Saami of Norway, there are commonalities that serve to emphasize the practices shared by First Nations peoples in the so-called fourth world. (2003, 271)

NOTE

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